

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 OSLO 01901 101150Z

46

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T OSLO 1901

EXDIS

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REF: A. STATE 91998; OSLO 1797.

I INVITED FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND TO LUNCH ON MAY 8 PRIMARILY TO
DISCUSS IN GREATER DETAIL THE ISSUE OF A SPANISH LINK WITH
NATO(REF A.). HE WAS NO MORE ENCOURAGING THAN HE HAD BEEN ON MAY
2(REF B.). I ALSO HAD OCCASION AT LUNCHEON ON APRIL 24 TO DISCUSS
SOME FORM OF RELATIONSHIP WITH SPAIN WITH FINANCE MINISTER KLEPPE
WHO IS PERHAPS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MEMBER OF THE CABINET. HE WAS
ALSO QUITE NEGATIVE. DISCUSSION OF THIS QUESTION WITH VARIOUS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 OSLO 01901 101150Z

MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMUNITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE

VISIT OF SACLANT POLAD SWANK BROUGHT UNIFORMLY NEGATIVE RESPONSES. I MUST CONCLUDE, THEREFORE, THE ISSUE IS A TOTAL NON-STARTER SO FAR AS NORWAY IS CONCERNED. WE WILL CONTINUE TO TRY AND EDUCATE VARIOUS INFLUENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE POLICY-MAKING COMMUNITY, BUT I AM NOT SANGUINE OF HAVING ANY SUCCESS WITHIN A USEFUL TIME-FRAME.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS BEING USED BY NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS TO OPPOSE ANY EFFORT TO LINK SPAIN EVEN INDIRECTLY TO NATO AT THIS TIME.

RAISING A NATO LINK TO SPAIN WILL PLAY DIRECTLY INTO THE HANDS OF THOSE CIRCLES OPPOSED TO NATO. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO RETAIN THE SUPPORT, PARTICULARLY OF THE YOUNGER ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION.

NORWEGIANS PLACE PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE ON THE LANGUAGE IN THE NATO CHARTER DESCRIBING THE GOAL OF THE ALLIANCE AS THAT OF DEFENDING DEMOCRACY. THE EXISTENCE OF TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENTS IN PORTUGAL, GREECE AND TURKEY WEAKENED SUPPORT FOR NATO IN THE PAST. A LINK TO SPAIN WOULD HAVE THIS SAME EFFECT.

IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY UNWISE TO MAKE A MOVE NOW THAT CHANGES IN SPAIN ARE ALMOST CERTAIN TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS OR A YEAR.

IF WE WISH TO DEVELOP A LINK BETWEEN NATO AND POST-FRANCO SPAIN WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO IDENTIFY NATO WITH SUPPORT FOR FRANCO IN THE EYES OF THE SPANISH PEOPLE, THEREBY CREATING AN EMOTIONAL OBSTACLE IN THE WAY OF FUTURE COOPERATION.

NOW THAT THE US HAS FINALLY FREED ITSELF OF THE VIETNAMESE ALBATROSS, IT WOULD BE MOST UNWISE TO IDENTIFY ITSELF WITH ANOTHER UNPOPULAR CAUSE, TENDING TO CONFIRM WIDESPREAD POPULAR OPINION THAT US POLICY IS OPPOSED TO SOCIAL CHANGE. THE NEXT 6-18 MONTHS ARE VITAL IN MEASURING US CREDIBILITY AND LEADERSHIP IN EUROPE.

FRANCO IS MERELY A FIGUREHEAD, THE PROBLEM REMAINS WITH THOSE AROUND HIM.

DENMARK NETHERLANDS AND UK CAN BE EXPECTED TO JOIN NORWAY IN OPPOSING ANY SPANISH CONNECTION. FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR CROWE, DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSON ARRANGED TO MEET FRYDENLUND WHEN LATTER PASSED THROUGH COPENHAGEN EN ROUTE BACK FROM MIDDLE EAST, TO INFORM NORWEGIAN COLLEAGUE OF HIS STRONG OPPOSITION TO ANY GESTURE TOWARD SPAIN AT THIS TIME.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 OSLO 01901 101150Z

MOREOVER, IF WE INSIST ON RECEIVING NORWEGIAN APPROVAL FOR SOME GESTURE TOWARD SPAIN, THIS WILL HAVE TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE STARTING FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND IN THE LABOR PARTY'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE. THE RESULT WOULD VERY LIKELY BE A FORMAL STATEMENT OF OPPOSITION WHICH WOULD REDUCE FRYDENLUND'S ROOM FOR MANEUVER EVEN FURTHER.

FRYDENLUND CONCLUDED BLUNTLY THAT PRIME MINISTER BRATTELLI

PERSONALLY FEELS VERY STRONGLY ABOUT SPAIN(REFLECTING IN PART PRESUMABLY HIS EXPERIENCE IN NAZI PRISON CAMP WHERE HE ALMOST DIED). SHOULD THE PRESIDENT CHOOSE TO RAISE THE SPANISH ISSUE, FRYDENLUND THOUGHT THAT BRATTELLI(WHO IS NORMALLY VERY RETICENT) WOULD FEEL COMPELLED TO SPEAK OUT IN OPPOSITION TO MAKING ANY GESTURE TOWARD SPAIN.

I ASKED DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL ON MAY 9 WHETHER HE HAD HAD TIME TO FOLLOW UP ON HIS DISCUSSION OF SPAIN IN WASHINGTON WITH DEFENCE SECRETARY SCHLESSINGER. FOSTERVOLL REPLIED THAT HE HAD BEEN TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH THE LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER REPLACEMENT QUESTION, AND MOREOVER WAS CONCERNED NOT TO RAISE AN ISSUE WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE SUPPORT FOR THE F16.

I FOUND FRYDENLUND, LIKE KLEPPE, MUCH MORE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF ENSURING THAT THERE IS A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE TO THE COMMUNISTS WHEN FRANCO AND THE FALANGISTS PASS FROM THE SCENE. WE WILL BE DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY FOR CLOSER COOPERATION WITH NORWAY IN THIS ASPECT OF SPANISH RELATIONS IN A SEPERATE MESSAGE.
BYRNE

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